

## September Agenda

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Nativity of the B.V.M.</b>           | Thursday, 8 Sept, 6pm    |
| <b>SSC Synod, Charleston SC</b>         | 13-16 September          |
| <b>Diaconal Ordination, Columbia SC</b> | Saturday, 17 Sept        |
| <b>S. Matthew, ApEv</b>                 | Wednesday, 21 Sept, 10am |
| <b>Thursday Night at the Movies</b>     | Thursday, 22 Sept, 7pm   |
| <b>Vestry Meeting</b>                   | Sunday, 25 Sept, 12.30pm |

### Advertising Brochure

A color brochure is available in the back of the church, by the west doors, for use in advertising the parish. Please take one (or two) to pass on to a friend (or two).

### Standing Notices

The occasional Sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, Confession, Communion and Unction of the Sick, and the Office of the Dead are always available by appointment, at announced times, or as necessary.

Please call or e-mail the Church Office or the Rectory to inform the clergy if you or a loved one is in hospital.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE PARISH IN YOUR WILL**

The Anglican Church of  
S. John the Baptist  
PO Box 550  
Marshall, VA 20116



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*If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, please email:*

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# ECCE

The Newsletter of S. John the Baptist Anglican Church  
Marshall, Virginia

Issue 46 September 2011

Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

After the excitement of the past month, first an earthquake and then a hurricane, it will be nice to settle back into to our usual routine. But one can't help but reflect on these natural disasters in relation to our understanding of creation. Scripture tells us that when God created the cosmos, He pronounced it "good." Why then do these disasters occur, where seemingly innocent people lose their lives, their homes or their livelihoods?

Scripture informs us that after the fall from grace, not only man but creation was also affected. While the "good" is often evident in a beautiful sunset or in the country-side that surrounds us, we are frequently made aware of the many disasters that occur around the globe. We can see that sin is not simply a willful rejection of God's will, but also a distortion of the natural law upon which all creation is built. It makes sense, then, that the creation itself will be affected by the web of sin existing since the expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

In addition, while it may appear that innocent people are being singled out, we know, also from Scripture, that no one other than Our Lord or His Mother ever lived a sinless life. While these disasters affect people that may have had no part in precipitating their direct action, we are each guilty of contributing to the web of sin in which we find ourselves. In this sense, no one is innocent. At the same time, if we are all connected together through sin, we are also reminded of our responsibility to reach out to those who suffer as a result of these disasters.

So often we think of ourselves as being responsible only for ourselves. We forget that we are all intertwined in our common humanity. When one part suffers, we all suffer. Our Lord reminds us in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats that our responsibility extends to "the least of these my brethren." And when we reach out in support, we are doing nothing less than reaching out to Our Lord Himself. May God give us the grace to respond generously when given the opportunity.

Affectionately, your Friend and Pastor,

## Ordinariate Update

### Episcopal Church: Declining Numbers and the Anglican Ordinariate

WASHINGTON, DC (Catholic Online) - David Virtue of Virtue Online has been crunching numbers, trying to confirm claims of The Episcopal Church to having 2.3 million members. Virtue believes that many on the rolls are dead, have left the church or attend only a couple of times a year.

While membership is a valid statistic, the real question focuses upon how many people are actually attending services. What is the "average Sunday attendance (ASA)?"

The Episcopal Church (TEC) claims to have 6,825 parishes active in the United States. Of that number, Virtue's staff discovered that over 2,000 of those parishes have a demographic with the majority at age 60 plus. In addition, more than 2,200 parishes (around one third) have an average Sunday attendance (ASA) of 40 people or less. Another 2,300 parishes are between 41 and 100 people.

Virtue Online reported the following:

- Churches with an ASA of 20 or less totaled 903.
- Churches with an ASA of 20 - 30 totaled 612.
- Churches with an ASA of 31 - 40 ASA totaled 704
- Churches with an ASA of 41 - 50 ASA totaled 552
- Churches with an ASA of 51 - 100 ASA totaled 1,826
- Churches with an ASA of 101- 200 ASA totaled 1,454
- Churches with an ASA of 201 - 500 ASA totaled 677

Such attendance figures beg the question of how long can these parishes survive?

A mass exodus by Episcopalians is not new, this has been going on for several years. Many have found a new home in the multitude of Anglican jurisdictions that have either been waiting since the 1970's for more people to wake up and smell the coffee. Others have joined one of the newly established denominations who have become a

### Kudos

**To Susie Ashcom** for taking up the responsibilities of the Altar Guild.

**To all those** who faithfully host the Sunday coffee hour [sic] week after week.

lifeboat for those jumping ship.

With the anticipated establishment of the Anglican Ordinariate in the United States very soon, which will launch a number of new Anglican Use parishes, we can see that another exciting opportunity that many will prayerfully consider.

With the already-established Book of Divine Worship (based on the Book of Common Prayer) and an invitation to bring the richness of Anglican patrimony into the life of the Catholic Church, many can now prayerfully consider coming into full-communication with the Catholic Church amidst the familiarity of the liturgy.

In another post Virtue concluded with great accuracy, I'm confident, "The birth of The Anglican Mission in America (AMIA), CANA and subsequently ACNA with its two cousins in Canada, the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) and the Anglican Coalition in Canada (ACiC) mark an evangelical awakening and a new Anglican reformation that won't be stopped."

While the evangelical awakening is certainly taking place and a new Anglican via-media is being established, Anglo-Catholics must still answer some critical questions. What is the stand of my new jurisdiction regarding women's ordination, which is still a complex subject in the new Anglican world? What is the teaching of this jurisdiction concerning the seven sacraments? What about apostolic succession?

Episcopalians who are received into the Church through the Anglican Ordinariate are fully Catholic - they aren't just "associate members" or "Catholic lite." How amazing it is that, as Catholics, we are able to visit an Anglican Use parish or Eastern Rite parish and fully participate as brothers and sisters in Christ! We are in full communion.

We are witnessing in our day a demonstration of the Church Catholic, where the Church transcends language and culture and embraces the fullness of the Tradition without sacrificing her dogmas and doctrines.

### Transitus

There were no Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals recorded in the Parish Register during the past month.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Weekly Bible Study:** Wed., 10:45am

In September, we continue our Bible Study Wednesday mornings following the 10am Mass. Please join us as we study the Book of Exodus, and bring any friends who might be interested. This is a good way to introduce them to our parish and a good way for us to understand the foundation of our Christian faith.

**Society of Holy Cross Synod:** 13-16 Sept

Each year, the Society of the Holy Cross holds its annual Synod in September, around the Feast of the Holy Cross (14 September). This year, the host parish is the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston, South Carolina. During this week, the usual schedule will be suspended.

**Diaconal Ordination:** 17 Sept

Jonathan Ulsaker will be Ordered to the Diaconate (transitional) at the Anglican Church of the Epiphany in Columbia, SC. He will serve his diaconate in Columbia.

**Thursday Night at the Movies:** 18 Sept

Our film in September will be screened on Thursday, the 22nd at 7pm, and is entitled: "A Time for Drunken Horses." Here is the Netflix summary: *When the youngest boy of a destitute Kurdish family suffers from a terminal illness, his young siblings struggle to pay for a life-saving operation, resorting to manual labor and smuggling to raise the funds. With both parents dead, the children's devotion to one another is unparalleled, but mere day-to-day survival is tenuous in the unforgiving, freezing mountainous terrain along the Iran-Iraq border.*

gling - but again, in ignorance of the classical tradition of English liturgical prose (in which you need to be steeped if you are going to embark on this hazardous process) - to right the wrongs of the risible Novus Ordo translations. These were imposed in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (another much-vaunted force for "renewal" that has all but destroyed its Church).

In the new English translation of the Missal, some corrections have been made: the response to "The Lord be with you" is now "And with your spirit," a marked improvement (well, anything would be) on "And also with you" (the liturgico-linguistic equivalent of "Have a nice day").

But although they have all the resources of Cranmer to draw on, these Roman Catholics stumble as they try to elevate, because, like Andrew Motion and his friends, they do not know what liturgical language is and (as their productions show) have never given the concept sustained thought.

The sing-song of "Peace to his people on earth," from the Gloria in excelsis (that great liturgical song of praise), has been replaced by "and on Earth peace to people of good will." This clumsily unpunctuated locution isn't liturgical language; it's nothing more than flat-footed prose.

Cranmer got it right, because he had the ear for liturgical vocabulary and cadence: "and in earth peace, good will towards men," and knew what a comma was. The caesura there is as important as anything else, for emphasis and for cadence. One rather fears that Cardinal George Pell and his associates on his committee would not know a caesura if they fell over one, let alone know how to apply one for aural effect.

Worst of all is when they throw all caution to the wind in their well-intentioned desire to elevate the English and give us, for "one being with the Father" in the Nicene Creed, "consubstantial with the Father." Seeking the too-fancy Latinate word from the original text, they plummet. If only they had consulted the Prayer Book! "Being of one substance with the Father ..." - perfect in sound and sense and with a seamless consistency of utterance with the rest of the text.

Getting the theology right and getting the right English word for this or that Greek and Latin one is only the beginning. It's when the genius of the prose-poet is applied to those raw materials that true liturgical language composition begins, and few there are that have that precious gift. Beyond language, there are other invaluable elements of worship that are now discounted to the point of disappearance: the absence of language and movement in silence and stillness. Modern liturgical experts are terrified of these two "s" words and what they entail in worshipping practice.

Everyone must be chattering, and something must be happening - always. Nothing could be more alien than this busy-ness to the nurturing of the life of prayer, whether communally or individually, as all the masters of the prayer life repeatedly testify. One wants to cry out, in the midst of their hyperactive, wordy liturgies: "don't just do something, stand there!" And be silent.

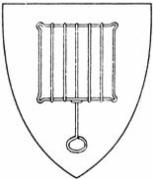
This is attuned to the most telling liturgical imperative of all, the Psalmist's instruction: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). "Teach us to sit still," T.S. Eliot prays in his most liturgical poem, *Ash-Wednesday* (1930), amidst the wordiness and movement of what Cardinal Newman called the "fever of life."

Only in such silence, waiting on God - as Simone Weil put it - and in a language redolent of transcendence, such as Cranmer's or liturgical Latin and the wondrous music attuned to both of these, can we begin the lifelong quest of listening to and talking with God, which is the life of prayer.

Everything else is an intrusion on and an interruption to the experience of the numinous.

*Barry Spurr is Professor of Poetry and Poetics at the University of Sydney. His most recent book is "Anglo-Catholic in Religion": T.S. Eliot and Christianity (Lutterworth, 2010).*

September 2011

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday  | Saturday   |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| <br>HOLY CROSS  | <br>HOLY NAME OF MARY | <br>S. CYPRIAN | <br>S. MATTHEW   | 1<br>S. Giles, AB<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm  | 2 <br>S. Stephen, KC<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm                            | 3<br>S. Pius X, PC<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Rosary 9.45am<br>Confessions 5pm<br>E.P. 5.30pm   |
| 4 <br>TRINITY XI<br>L.M. 8am<br>M.P. 9am<br>SCF 9.30am<br>Mass 10.30am                              | 5<br>S. Lawrence Justinian, BC<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm   | 6<br>Feria<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm  | 7<br>Feria<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Mass 10am<br>Bible Study 10:30<br>E.P. 5.30pm  | 8<br>NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (S. Hadrian, M)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm<br>Mass 6pm | 9 <br>S. Peter Claver, C (S. Gorgonius, M)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm      | 10<br>S. Nicholas of Tolentino, C<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Rosary 9.45am<br>Confessions 5pm<br>E.P. 5.30pm  |
| 11 <br>TRINITY XII (SS Protus & Hyacinth, MM)<br>L.M. 8am<br>M.P. 9am<br>SCF 9.30am<br>Mass 10.30am | 12<br>Holy Name of Mary<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm  | 13<br>Feria<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm   | 14<br>EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm  | 15<br>SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BVM (S. Nicomede, M)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm                      | 16 <br>S. Cyprian, BM (S. Ninian, BC)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm           | 17<br>Stigmata of S. Francis<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Rosary 9.45am<br>Confessions 5pm<br>E.P. 5.30pm   |
| 18 <br>TRINITY XIII<br>L.M. 8am<br>M.P. 9am<br>SCF 9.30am<br>Mass 10.30am                         | 19<br>S. Theodore, BC (S. January & Companions, MM)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm                      | 20<br>S. Eustace & Companions, MM (Vigil)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm                         | 21 <br>S. MATTHEW, AP EV (Ember Day)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Mass 10am<br>Bible Study 10:30<br>E.P. 5.30pm | 22<br>S. Thomas of Villanova, BC<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm<br>TNM 7pm                          | 23 <br>S. Linus, PM (S. Thecla, VM Ember Day)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm | 24 <br>Our Lady of Ransom (Ember Day)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Rosary 9.45am<br>Confessions 5pm<br>E.P. 5.30pm |
| 25 <br>TRINITY XIV<br>L.M. 8am<br>M.P. 9am<br>SCF 9.30am<br>Mass 10.30am                          | 26<br>Martyrs of North America (SS. Cyprian & Justina, MM)<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm               | 27<br>SS. Cosmas & Damian, MM<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm                                     | 28<br>S. Wenceslas, Duke, M<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>Mass 10am<br>Bible Study 10:30<br>E.P. 5.30pm   | 29<br>S. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm<br>Mass 6pm                            | 30 <br>S. Jerome, PrCD<br>M.P. 9.30am<br>E.P. 5.30pm                        | <br>MICHAELMAS  |

Ab=Abbot; Ap=Apostle; B=Bishop; C=Confessor; Dn=Deacon; D=Doctor; E=Emperor; Ev=Evangelist; K=King; M=Martyr; P=Pope; Pn=Penitent Pr=Priest; Q=Queen; V=Virgin; W=Widow; SCF=School of Christian Formation; SOC=Stations of the Cross; TNM=Thursday Night at the Movies

RECOVERING THE NUMINOUS:  
THE BIBLE, LANGUAGE AND LITURGY

By Barry Spurr

The 400th anniversary of the 1611 Bible - variously known as the King James and Authorized Version - published on 2 May 1611, should stimulate renewed discussion about the important matter of the language that we use in public worship.

That translation was "appointed" to be read in churches - that is, read out loud in the context of the liturgy. But it was not only to be heard and to be appropriate, liturgically, for such reading and hearing. It was to be striking and memorable, too, because most of those who heard it, in the seventeenth century, certainly could not read it, any more than they could read the Prayer Book.

They heard these linguistically striking and memorable texts and, as the result of repetition, week by week, year by year, and on the solemn, repeated occasions of baptism, marriage and death, remembered them and came to cherish them.

Their telling and tolling phrases became part of the people's word-store and of that of the entire vernacular culture of the English-speaking world. The literate and well-educated minority - who were able to read these texts for themselves - also came to know and love that language too (such was its wide appeal), and those of them who were writers, including the greatest poets and prose-stylists in English literature, drew upon it in their own writings, through the centuries.

This was a language with a cadence of expression (which is as important as vocabulary and imagery) that appealed to what T.S. Eliot called the "auditory imagination." When most other memories have gone, elderly folk can still recall and repeat word-perfect the biblical and liturgical language of their childhood and youth. That language of Bible and Prayer Book was made to be (and was fit to be) known by heart.

This is not only or, ultimately most importantly, an aesthetic matter. Great ideas require great words, and great words are the works of inspired wordsmiths. Their language does justice to what it expresses. For the Christian, nothing is more important, linguistically, than the language of scripture, prayer and worship.

The dismantling of Anglicanism's rich verbal liturgical culture (and all that flowed from that, in glorious music inspired by it, hymnody, religious poetry and learned and eloquent preaching, and as the textual accompaniment of dignified and inspiring ceremonial) was undertaken in the name of a liturgical "renewal" which has been a failure.

The Western Church at large has been for forty years, and continues, mostly, to be, in denial about this colossal flop, having invested untold resources of personnel, time and money in the destruction of its linguistic-liturgical heritage, Latin and Early Modern English (the language of Shakespeare and Milton).

Geniuses of English composition like Lancelot Andrewes (who had oversight of the Authorized Version translation) and Thomas Cranmer (of The Book of Common Prayer) knew that the aural appeal of the language of worship was an essential ingredient in lifting men's and women's minds and hearts to worship, as well as teaching them the truths of the faith, and teaching them, indeed, by so lifting them up.

But the emphasis of the modern liturgical movement has been a determination to ensure that liturgical language is simplified and modernised so that it might be both comprehensible and didactic. What has been overlooked has been the need for it to be inspiring too. It is a language written as if it were a dead language.

In the pursuit of the instructive character of liturgy (however simplistically conceived), revisers have been obsessed with the principle that worshipping speech, by being cast in a version of vernacular contemporary discourse (as stilted and unnatural in its own way as Elizabethan English, but without its poetry), will thereby be accessible (on a certain literal-minded level) in order to teach - to "connect," as they would probably say - with its audience.

Further, they believe liturgical language must be easily comprehensible - preferably, immediately. So, in coming to regard the didactic element of liturgy as of primary importance, liturgical authors have also reached the point of wanting that instruction to be instantaneously available (an impossible goal, as the mystery of faith is not patient of such simplicity), through straightforward language primarily, but also through pared-down ritual actions - keeping everything as un-complex and accessible as possible.

Thereby, they miss the essential point of the subtlety, elusiveness and multi-layered quality of faith, even its difficulty, which language should reflect, not water-down or diminish for the sake of a quick fix of alleged understanding.

This "renewal" has been driven, in other words, by taking from the language of the liturgy everything that made it redolent of the numinous realm to which it should aspire. It is no wonder it has proved to be a disaster.

An unintentional parody of modern liturgical English which neatly captures some of its ham-fisted characteristics has been concocted this year by former Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion, with some other poets. They call it an "agnostic liturgy" which - astonishingly - was offered in "liturgical events" in St George's Chapel at Windsor in March and at Manchester Cathedral in May. This "liturgy" of the poets begins: "Minister: What is this England? We have a patron saint. What does he stand for? We have a flag. Sometimes it speaks of sporting passion. Sometimes it speaks of pomp. Sometimes it speaks of grief, at memories of war. Sometimes it speaks of vicious hatred. But when it flies upon this church it speaks of something else ..."

This is, indeed, in the mode of modern liturgical writing, of the kind satirised years ago in the regular Private Eye segment on the Alternative Service Book (1980).

Infantile and crude in vocabulary, straining after a rhythmic effect (the thudding pseudo-incantation on "sometimes") producing tedium rather than transcendence, it attempts to take flight - "when it flies upon this church it speaks of something else" - and immediately falls flat on its face.

It is the writing of people who do not know what liturgical prose is, and what is more (to apply what F.R. Leavis once said of C.P. Snow's confidence in himself as a novelist) do not know they do not know, otherwise they would not so shamefacedly produce such tripe.

Almost as miserable (although the intentions are contrastingly noble) at the other end of the spectrum of liturgical composition in English today, are those who, in the Catholic Church, are strugg-